AMERICAN

EDUCATIONAL MONTHLY.

JULY, 1875.

SPELLING—OUR DICTIONARIES.

AN eminent dignitary of the Established Church—one just below a bishop—who had written something about our speech, was once pertinently (and, perhaps, impertinently) informed by one of his censors that the progress of the English language was mightier than the breath of deans. The remark is true; and, we may add, it is also mightier than the breath of publishers.

There are, without doubt, many persons, students and others, who care nothing, as it were, for the authors or the publishers of the two great dictionaries, but who, nevertheless, would be glad to adopt the best system of orthography. To such persons, in these days of spelling-matches, a few plain and truthful words concerning the spelling of Webster and of Worcester may not be without interest.

At least several hundred words appear in the dictionaries as words of unsettled orthography. They are spelled in two or more ways. This is to be regretted, and, within certain limits, can be, and should be, reformed. If possible, it should be altogether reformed. It is seldom indeed that good usage is so evenly divided, and analogy so evenly balanced, as to make both forms equally proper. If they are not equally proper,

the careful lexicographer will make the better mode clearly and conspicuously evident, with the view of expelling from the language all forms but one, for only one is needed. Neither Webster nor Worcester, it seems to us, has done this so well as it ought to have been done. Fortunately, most of these words are not in common, everyday use.

But how shall we spell such words as the derivatives of *cancel*, etc., and such words as *theatre*, *centre*, etc.? If the etymologies [L. *cancellare*, *theatrum*, *centrum*, etc.] count for nothing—and, indeed, they are not of great weight in settling this question—I should say, by all means, spell the words as men of the highest culture, especially as the best writers, spell them. There is no question that that is *cancelled*, *cancelling*, *theatre*, *centre*. They are, as has been well said before, so spelled in all English publications, in all our Bibles and prayer-books, in the works of Bancroft, Prescott, Irving, Bryant, Everett, Daniel Webster, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, Marsh, and, in fact, in the works of all the great writers of the country, almost, or quite, without exception. And what does one gain by spelling these words, and others like them, in the Websterian way? It is not more simple—at least, not enough to be worth speaking about. And one must be inconsistent to do so. When we come to *central*, for instance, we do not find it spelled in Webster *centeral*. To have been a consistent reformer, Webster should have made thousands of changes which he did not make, though he had better reasons for doing what he refrained from doing. Some words of the writer of the most magnificent of English, in reference to another case of literary censorship, may be applied to Webster's abortive attempt to make over our language. It "cannot be exempted from the number of vain and impossible attempts; and he who were pleasantly disposed could not well avoid to liken it to the exploit of that gallant man who thought to pound up the crows by shutting his park gate."

For a while, when Webster got into the fair domain of English, he slashed and hacked most vigorously with his little hatchet, as the mutilated forms *croud*, *fether*, *lether*, *imagin*, *leperd*, *maiz*, *neger*, *thum*, *wimmin*, etc., etc., within the covers of the edition of 1806 testify; but his publishers presently put

a stop to such barbarisms, and began the work of restoration as well as the business of telling how it was. But in this last part there seems to be no similarity to the other story.

Nobody now admires such orthographical antics as these of Noah Webster; but how much better than these is *ax* for *axe*, *hight* for *height*, and *coker-nut*, for *cocoa-nut*, which we find even in the last edition? These forms really have no advantage over the established spelling, and are of no sort of use other than to cause the reader who meets with them to stop and rub his eyes, and to say "Bless me, how odd!"

And such freaks in spelling, which certainly tend to disfigure and impair the language, are recommended to us! By whom? By the publishers; by the county paper, perhaps; by the *New York Tribune*, of course; and by some writers, whose works are—well, as we do not wish to give offense, we will say,—not yet classic.

"Some people will say these are little things. They are not; they are of bad example. They tend to spread the baneful notion that there is no such thing as a high, correct standard in intellectual matters: that every one may as well take his own way."

There is another side to this question, which is practically very serious. We refer to the frequent changes of spelling in the various editions of Webster's dictionaries. The course of their publishers reminds us of the man who blew both hot and cold. "Dr. Webster was the greatest philologist in the world; his etymologies are the best in the world, in fact, almost perfect." And immediately Dr. Mahn is employed to make over Dr. Webster's etymologies, and he saves none of them—of those peculiarly Dr. Webster's own. Whole pages go—where at least they will never more excite our wonder. The same is true of the spelling. For example, in the edition of 1859 we find *kidnapped* spelled thus; in the edition of 1864, *kidnaped*. *Compromitted* we find in the former edition with one *t*; in the last, in direct violation of the rule which the Websterians value so highly, with two *t*'s. And these are but examples. It is much to be regretted that two modes of spelling are given in this Dictionary; it is very confusing, and wholly unnecessary.

For one thing the publishers of "Webster's Dictionary" are to be commended, that is, the frequent corrections which they

cause to be made in the plates of their book. Such a work can never be perfect, but it should be improved from time to time. We are glad to believe that the enterprising publishers are wise enough to expunge errors (those in spelling always excepted) as soon as possible after they are brought to their notice.

In various respects we have found the Quarto excellent, but, at the same time, in the treatment of many questions of the first importance, there is evidence of a great deal of poor journeyman-work. We find numerous marks of the rawness of raw apprentices. This much, we think, may be allowed us to say in the way of caution.

It has seemed to us, to a certain extent, a very good test of a writer's culture—at least, of his scholarly taste—which orthography he follows. If he has in him "the note of provinciality," he is apt to spell in the Websterian manner, like the county paper. If he belongs with scholars, he will prefer that his words shall take the form adopted by the great writers of all English-speaking countries.

L. J. C.

GRAMMAR—ITS PROVINCE.

WHENEVER we take up a new book on grammar we naturally wish to know how far its claim to being a grammar is just. We ask, is it what a grammar should be? In order to answer this intelligently we admit that we need to have a clear and correct idea of what grammar as a branch of knowledge and a department of instruction is—whether it is an art or a science, and to understand what its legitimate province and aims are. A few words on this point may not be inappropriate in an educational journal at any time. We therefore devote a moment or two to its consideration.

A science is a system of principles regarded as more or less established concerning some particular subject; as, the science of astronomy, of botany, of chemistry, of medicine, etc. An art is a skillful employment of previously acquired principles; as, the art of music, of composition, of oratory, of medicine, of husbandry, etc. Now, while speaking correctly or speaking

grammatically is properly an art, grammar, which is an embodiment or system of principles, is a science. It is the science upon which the art of speaking grammatically is based. But to define it as "the science of language," as many do, is to give it a definition altogether too comprehensive.

It is like saying that arithmetic is the science of mathematics, whereas it is only one department of that science. This definition, or the equivalent statement that it is the science that teaches the right use of words, or that which teaches the art of speaking and writing correctly, may have been well enough for the ancients, who included under the name of grammar all the departments of linguistic knowledge and art. But for us to define it thus, when it includes scarcely a tithe of what it once was made to embrace, is about as rational as it would be to continue Pliny's application of the term "Natural History" to agriculture, astronomy, commerce, ethnology, geography, history, medicine, physics, and the arts, as well as to natural history properly so called. His natural history was a sort of encyclopedia. So grammar with the ancients, despite the etymology of the term, included criticism, rhetoric, logic, and all that pertained to the study and use of language, even to penmanship. But with us it has no such extended application. The true province of grammar now is to treat of the principles that relate to what is called speaking or writing *grammatically*. There are numberless examples of improprieties, vulgarisms, provincialisms, bad rhetoric, yes, bad English, which, as Professor Greene justly says, "can never be reached by the rules of grammar. They must be corrected by the laws of good usage." In accordance with which Marcel, with a world of truthfulness, says: "Grammar assists so little in freeing the expression of thought from inaccuracy, obscurity, and nonsense that a composition may be strictly grammatical, and withal replete with incongruities of all sorts, bad spelling, inappropriate terms, inelegancies, alliterations, pleonasms, barbarisms, awkward constructions, unsuitable figures, illogical deductions. This truth is forcibly illustrated by those who, in learning a foreign language, have attended to grammatical principles and exercises more than to good models. They often express themselves most incorrectly and ludicrously in that language, although they may not violate a single rule of grammar. In

illustration of this point take the following from Marsh's Lectures on the English Language. "*Commence* is used by good writers only as a transitive verb, and as such requires the participle or participial noun, not the infinitive, after it. The phrase 'I *commence to build*,' now occasionally employed [instead of *commenced building* or *began to build*], is therefore not sanctioned by respectable usage. At the same time there is no valid *grammatical* objection to its use." The same may be said of numberless other phrases and expressions. "I *disremember* what he said." As Greene says: "What rule of grammar will correct such an expression? Cannot every word be parsed?" "I shed a *power* of tears." What violation of grammatical principles is involved here? This is simply inelegant English, though it is the exact counterpart of the Latin "*Vim lachrymarum profudi*, an example of the purest classical Latinity. English idiom or good English usage thus condemns thousands of expressions, the impropriety of which cannot be reached by grammatical corrections. What, then, is the province of grammar? To answer this we need but to ask what we mean by speaking or writing *grammatically*. When we say of a person that his language is grammatical, do we refer to his orthography? Not at all. If we merely hear him speak, we can hardly form any judgment of his spelling. Or, if his language is committed to writing, it may present gross violations of the rules of spelling, and yet be strictly grammatical. If his spelling and the structure of his sentences are both bad, we say his orthography *and* grammar are defective. We thus make orthography something distinct from grammar. The same may be said of orthoepy and prosody. If a man's pronunciation is unexceptionable, no one ever thinks of saying on that account that his language is grammatically correct. And if his punctuation or his versification (in case he is a poet) is good, he is not, therefore, spoken of or considered as a good grammarian. The reason is obvious: Neither punctuation nor versification belongs to what we consider grammar. It is true grammarians generally teach that orthography and prosody, and sometimes orthoepy, are among the subdivisions of the science of grammar. But the manner in which they slight these subjects clearly indicates that they make these divisions rather from a deference to custom than from a conviction that they are proper and necessary. They

remind us of the preacher who is said to have divided his subject thus: "1. The world; 2. The flesh; 3. The devil;" and to have added: "We will not dwell on the world; will touch but lightly on the flesh; and hasten on to deal mainly with the devil."

Ben Jonson, one of the earliest writers on this subject, confines grammar to Etymology, which, he tells us, "is the true notation of words; and Syntax, which is the right ordering of them." This division is in accordance with the present universally conceded notion of the nature and province of grammar. For, as one of the acutest and most thoughtful of writers on the study of language, Marcel, says, grammar, "is now confined to Accidence, which treats of the nature and inflections of words, and to Syntax, which furnishes rules for their arrangement and concord." Mulligan, in like manner, in his able "Exposition of the *Grammatical* Structure of the English Language," limits himself to "the classification of words, the modifications or changes of form which words undergo in order to express a modified meaning, and the laws or principles which regulate the combination of words for the purpose of expressing thought." If his design had also embraced the *orthographical* and *rhythmical* structure of the language, he would necessarily have treated of the principles of orthography and prosody. But, in so doing, he would have stepped aside from his professed object, and given us something more than a treatise on the *grammatical* structure of the language. It is no part of the province of grammar, as such, to treat of the pronunciation of words, either singly in their elements or as they stand connected together in sentences; or of the spelling, the meaning, the origin, or the composition of individual words; or of the rhythm, the force, or the flow of words in sentences and paragraphs. Its business is simply to deal with words as related elements (either really or possibly) of speech or discourse; its aim being to teach correctness in the combination of words as a medium of expressing thought, whether expressed orally or in writing.

In deciding, then, as to the merits of any work as a textbook on grammar, we consider, first of all, whether it confines itself as a whole to what seems to be its true province. We next look at the arrangement of the work, see whether it is

natural, clear and progressive, or unnatural, illogical, confusing. We consider also whether due order, perspicuity and adaptability are observed in the details of the work; and, above all else, whether the book as a whole is really practical and calculated to impart a correct knowledge and lead to a right use of the principles of speaking and writing grammatically.

THE ISLAND OF SARK.

SEVEN miles from Guernsey, is Sark, one of the smallest, most curious, most interesting, most elusive, most desolate, most beautiful, most dangerous, most sublime, of the Atlantic islands. The old legend-makers, who have sung such weird tales of phantom islands, now appearing close at hand, then vanishing like enchantment, must have drawn their inspiration from watching Sark from Guernsey. On some days it is so distinct and looks so near, that cliffs and houses and even men can be distinguished with the naked eye, and the soft play of light and shade and color on the rocks. The next day one shall look in the same direction, and he will discern with difficulty the faint hazy outline of what seems an island forty miles away. The approach to the island is almost always hazardous, and except in the best weather no boat can land or leave, owing to the maelstrom-like velocity and turbulence of the tides, which rush raging in all directions around the shore, and fill the hollow caves with melancholy dirges, as if for the many wrecked on that merciless coast. The late Seigneur of Sark was lost off Point Nez, and the present Seigneur and his family have had an escape bordering on the miraculous. Sometimes, even in summer, weeks will pass without the possibility of communicating with the island. In winter one must depend entirely on Sark boats, of seven or eight tons burden, strong and weatherly. In summer a small steamer plies in good weather between Guernsey and Sark, but it cannot enter the port, which is doubtless the smallest in Europe. It is formed by a breakwater thrown across a miniature bay called the Creux. A little beach extends around the base of the vertical cliffs, and the

interior of the island is only reached by an artificial opening actually pierced through the surrounding wall of granite.

Sark is about three miles and a half long, and is divided into Great and Little Sark, the latter being a small peninsula at the southern end, united to the main portion by a curtain of rock some two hundred yards long, called the Coupé. It is three hundred feet above the sea, on one side literally vertical, on the other nearly so. The path at the top is not over five feet wide. It is said one person who lived on Little Sark never dared during a lifetime to cross over the Coupé. Another old fellow, who used to like to take his grog of an evening in Great Sark, would, on returning to Little Sark at night, walk several times over a log that lay near the Coupé. If the result was satisfactory to his equilibrium, he would then venture to reel across the Coupé. The cliffs surrounding the island furnish an inexhaustible supply of the grand, the wild, the picturesque. The rocks are clothed with highly colored vines and lichens; the magnificent caves, seemingly the abode of sea-fairies, teem with varied and beautiful sub-marine vegetation and diverse forms of life, shell-fish, mollusca, algæ, and the like. Our limits forbid more than allusion to such spots as the Antelets, the Creux du Derrible, D'Ixcart Bay, etc.

The interior of the island is devoted to agriculture and pasturage, and although not generally wooded, and destitute of streams, presents many choice bits of rural under-wood. The avenue leading to the Seigneurie is exceedingly beautiful, and the building itself is a very pleasing object. The huts of the peasantry are often of the most massive construction, having walls six feet thick.

Those who suppose Monaco, or Andorra, or San Marino to be the smallest state in Europe must awake from their delusion. Sark has, by the last census, only 546 inhabitants, and is practically an independent state, owing only a feudal allegiance to Great Britain by way of Guernsey.—S. G. W. BENJAMIN, in *Harper's Magazine.*

SELF.—Say nothing respecting yourself, either good, bad, or indifferent—nothing good, for that is vanity; nothing bad, for that is affectation; nothing indifferent, for that is silly.

HOW TO TEACH. Fifth Grade.—Continued.*

GEOGRAPHY.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR ALL GRADES.—It is of the first importance that geography should be so taught and reviewed as not to leave in the mind of the pupil a mere collection of facts, without mutual relation or dependence. On the contrary, he should, from the first, be led to consider the *earth* as man's dwelling-place—its *motions* as bringing him the necessary vicissitudes of day and night, and the changes of the seasons—its *land-surface* as the chief theater of animal and vegetable life—the *ocean* as the world's broad highway, and the exhaustless source of clouds and rains, so necessary to every form of life on the land-surface—the great permanent *air-currents* as carrying to the land this moisture from the sea—the *mountains* as its condensers, as well as the chief source of mineral wealth—the *springs* and *rivers*, with their branches, as carrying back again, and over the land, the ever-circulating water of the ocean—and of *cities* and *towns*, not as black dots on a map, in colored patches, which he has learned to call countries, perhaps near some crooked black streaks which he has learned to call rivers, but as the centers of social life and development, the seats of government, and the crowded, busy hives of human industry and intelligence.

When geography is thus taught it is one of the most interesting, important, and practical of studies; but if it is taught chiefly as a description, by unvarying formulæ, of long lists of rivers, capes, peninsulas, boundaries, etc., supplemented, perhaps, by a precise, verbatim repetition of the descriptive geography, as contained in even the very best text-book, it is one of the dullest and most unprofitable of studies.

The text-book is a most important, and even indispensable *auxiliary*, but there is no more common and pernicious error than that of *substituting it in place of the teacher*, who thus is degraded into a mere stupid, profitless, and mechanical *hearer of lessons*. The requisites for successful teaching are a globe,

---

*From "How to Teach. A Manual of Methods."

a blackboard, an outline map and pointer, and a good text-book. The pupil's first impressions should be formed from the globe rather than from the flat and distorted representation of the map. When the text-book is to be used, and important and comprehensive lessons given, such as the presentation of the general outline of the world as a whole, or of a continent or grand division, or of the United States as a whole, the subject should first be gone over orally, in outline, by the teacher. If this be done in a spirited manner, and the results carefully tested, the detailed study of the text-book will be greatly assisted and unified by the comprehensive view thus imparted, and the important details more surely remembered.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE FIFTH GRADE.—In the preceding grade the pupil has been taught the leading elementary ideas upon which geography is founded; in the present grade these are to be reviewed, explained, and systematized, beginning with a general view of the world. The following is a syllabus of the points which should claim attention:

SYLLABUS FOR THE FIFTH GRADE.—*Part 1st.—The form of the earth, its magnitude, the continents, and grand divisions*, their relative positions, their connecting isthmuses, and a few of their most important projections—the *oceans*, their positions, and principal arms and islands—five or six of the great *mountain systems* of America, and from eight to ten in the rest of the world; three or four well-known *volcanoes*—about a dozen each of the chief *rivers* and *straits*, and about half as many great *lakes*—from ten to a dozen of the most important *cities* of the world, and, in a very general way, the location of the most important countries, such as the *United States*, *Great Britain*, *Germany*, *Japan*, *China*, etc. With each of these cities and countries some interesting or important *fact* should be at once associated.

Part 2d. (To be taught as facts, in the simplest outline, and without attempting to explain, according to any of the hypotheses of scientific physical geography, using the map and globe, whenever necessary, to impress any particular statement on the pupils' minds.) A *brief* notice of the *ocean currents*, their direction, temperature, and use, pointing out only the equatorial current, one Arctic current, one Antarctic current, and the Gulf Stream—the *trade winds* (very briefly), their location,

direction, use in commerce, and their influence (in assisting to produce the great South American rivers, the Nile, etc.)—a general notion of *climate*, as affected by distance from the equator, and by elevation—the *motions of the earth*, and the *inclination of its axis*—the *zones*, their limits, and a very few of their well-known and characteristic plants and animals, and, in a very general way, the location of the *chief races* of mankind.

"OUTLINES OF NORTH AMERICA."—*First:* Treat the continent *as a whole*, pointing out its separate countries, most important capes, peninsulas, islands, and arms of the sea; its divisions into mountains, plateaux, and lowland plains, naming only a few of the most important of each.

Iceland, Greenland, Alaska, and all other *Arctic Geography* to be treated very briefly, and chiefly with reference to climate, resources, and people. *Newfoundland;* the *Dominion of Canada*, its surface, its provinces and territories, with their climate, resources, and people, and our trade with them; the form of government; the capital of the Dominion and those of the provinces, and the other most important towns; the commercial and international importance of the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes, and the small importance of the other rivers, of which three or four will be enough.

UNITED STATES.—A simple outline will embrace the following:

LOCAL GEOGRAPHY.—The boundaries of the country as a whole; its dimensions in round numbers; the location of the great mountain systems; the western plateaux [a section of the country roughly drawn in chalk upon the blackboard will be found efficient]; the high western plain; the low central plain; the eastern slope, and the California basin; about a dozen of the chief rivers, with the great branches; about five or six each of the great lakes, bays, and capes; about twenty of the principal cities.

DESCRIPTIVE GEOGRAPHY will include a very brief description of the highlands, lowlands, and drainage system already pointed out; the climate and its gradual modifications by latitude, elevation, and distance from the sea; and a general statement of the leading agricultural staples in the order of their latitude—rice, sugar, cotton, tobacco, corn, and wheat.

MEXICO.—Its surface, climate, resources, and people; their

language, government, and social condition; about five or six of the principal cities.

CENTRAL AMERICA very briefly; the names of its states and their capitals, and their general similarity to Mexico.

WEST INDIES, the principal groups, about ten or a dozen of the most important islands; five or six principal ports; the climate, resources, and people; their colonial relations, and their commerce with the United States, if important.

LANGUAGE.

CORRECTION OF LANGUAGE.—In all the grades the pupils should be trained in the *correction of language*, and taught to avoid common errors of speech. This is best accomplished in connection with the *dictation exercises* required in the several grades; also by oral exercises specially adapted to this purpose, and by *incidental instruction* during the recitations and lessons in other subjects, as in the definition exercises, the lessons in elementary science, etc. Indeed, every exercise in which the pupils are required to use their own language, either orally or in writing, should be made a vehicle for this instruction, the object being to impart the *habit of using correct language*. It is of the greatest importance that this habit should be acquired at an early age, for without it the technical study of grammar will scarcely prove adequate to impart fluency in the correct use of language. The old habits, in spite of the knowledge of principles and rules, will be always apt to show themselves.

On this account teachers cannot be too careful themselves in the use of language. Their *words* as well as their *acts* should present a model for the imitation of their pupils; and example in this, as in other things, will prove far more potent than precept. For special exercises in this department of the instruction the following suggestions are made:

Write on the blackboard such faults in expression as are liable to be committed, including—1. Ungrammatical expressions: as *I haven't no book; I haven't got my pencil; I seen him do it*, etc. 2. Slang: *This is an awful easy lesson*, etc. The faulty expressions written in this way should, however, consist of such as may have been committed by some of the pupils of the class, lest those who have acquired good habits of speech be contaminated by having their attention called to such errors.

Award premium marks, or some other kind of reward, to those who succeed in pointing out improper expressions on the part of their classmates; but let this be done in the right spirit, and not for the purpose of subjecting any of the pupils to jeers or ridicule. The fact that their language may be made the subject of criticism by their fellow-pupils will put all on the alert to use the best modes of expression in their power, and then correction will have a permanent effect in improving them in the use of language.

Sometimes one or more pupils may be selected by the class to act as censors for a definite period (say a week), and to call attention to errors made by any of the pupils of the class. The object of this and the previous suggestion is to make the pupils critics on themselves and others, most of the inaccuracies committed resulting rather from carelessness and inattention than from a want of knowledge. The teacher will, of course, often find it necessary to give direct instruction in relation to certain expressions.

Of course, no instruction in technical grammar, or in any grammatical rules, is required until the next grade.

ELEMENTARY SCIENCE.

(By Oral Instruction.)

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR ALL GRADES.

The *leading object* in this branch of instruction is to cultivate habits of *observation and reflection*, and to give *facility in oral description*. Avoid everything tending to convert these lessons into recitations of set forms of words, however these forms may have been obtained, however well they may be understood by the pupils, and however important the facts thus stated.

"*Familiar objects*," and familiar animals, plants, and minerals take precedence of all others in the selection of topics.

It is neither possible nor desirable to attempt to teach all, or even the greater part of the topics that might be classified with the requirements of any grade. No topic should be treated exhaustively, nor should the topics selected be so few, or so frequently reviewed, as to narrow down or suspend the discipline of the observing faculty. The selection and limitation must be left to the good sense of the teacher.

The *objective method* of teaching presents two distinct, though intimately related departments. *Perceptive* teaching, in which the object, as an acorn or an egg, is directly presented to the pupils' senses; and *conceptive teaching*, in which impressions previously received are recalled, arranged, and utilized, the objects themselves not being presented to the senses during the lesson. An oak, an elephant, or a thunder-storm would fall under the latter department.

The use of pictures, models, or other sensible representations of objects, constitutes an important combination and modification of the two principal methods, and should be often employed.

Definitions should be very sparingly introduced, and *never* in the first stage of a subject. *If given at all*, they should sum up knowledge already attained. The terms *organic, inorganic, vegetable, animal*, and *mineral* are prominent among the very few terms requiring definition. Such definitions should be prepared for by a process at once inductive and objective.

No fact which the teacher can *readily* lead the pupil to discover for himself should be imparted by the teacher. *Important* facts not readily derived from the pupil's own observation, must, of course, be supplied by the teacher. Avoid overloading a topic by details. No topic should be selected in which the number of *facts to be told* bears a large proportion to those which the pupil may be *led to discover* for himself.

The language used by the pupil should be entirely his own, excepting, of course, the few indispensable definitions.

The *process employed* will present two distinct stages: *First*, the analytical or preparatory, in which the teacher leads the pupil by questions to discover or to remember the properties or peculiarities of an object, or to state any other important facts associated with it. The responses by the pupil will be, of course, in his own words; and the additional statements which the teacher himself may find necessary to make, will be given in the form of conversations. This stage gives the principal discipline of the powers of observation and reflection.

The points thus considered, and the facts thus stated, should be written upon the blackboard in the briefest possible synoptical form, but each only *after* it has been considered. While some such synopsis is *indispensable* to the *teacher* as the first

step of *preparation* for giving the lesson, it should never be presented to the *pupil* except by the *gradual* process above indicated.

ICELAND AND ICELAND'S MILLENNIAL.

DR. HAYES attended the Millennial ceremonies of Iceland in 1874. In his recent report to the American Geographical Society he speaks of the occasion as one of unanticipated dignity. The people were impressed with the importance of the occasion. Evidently the display was not in excess of their expectations, and they bore their part in it with the traditional and high breeding of their Norse ancestry.

"Our credentials being delivered to the proper authorities, we were courteously received, and situations were assigned us in accordance with rules previously laid down for the reception of the representatives of learned societies. These were always near His Majesty the King, the Governor of the island, and the Mayor of Reykjavik. The formal occasion embraced divine service, the cathedral rival proceedings at Thingvalla, and two public banquets. The cathedral services were very impressive. A native hymn, called 'Iceland's Thousand Years,' was sung by the entire congregation with marvelous effect. The music was fine, the voices excellent, and the occasion being one of deep feeling to every Icelander, it is not surprising that there was exhibited a deep emotion. Never before have a people celebrated the thousandth anniversary of an organized government, substantially following the organic plan, and certainly it would be impossible, at the present time, for any other people to celebrate, in this sense, its millennial and claim consistently to preserve its language, laws, and social customs practically unimpaired by the lapse of time. After the church services the King, at his banquet, arose and drank prosperity to the future Iceland; a hundred cannon echoed the sentiment, and amid the wildest enthusiasm the new constitution was proclaimed. This gives Iceland practical freedom from Denmark, and no doubt it will tend greatly to develop the country, which possesses many resources needing cultivation to make them profitable. At

present the chief exports are codfish, salmon, and wool. While the cultivation of these industries does not create any large degree of individual wealth, they are productive of general competency. I found the necessaries of life possessed everywhere in abundance; luxuries were not uncommon, and the people were happy and content. The school system is most admirable, and the Icelanders show a remarkable greed for learning. In the humblest peasant hut you always find books. Some of our English classics are translated and published in Reykjavik, and are greatly in demand. The book-store was crowded when I visited it. Crime is almost unknown, the common jail not having had an occupant, except the jailer and his family, these twenty years past; not indeed until this last summer, when the King's staff used it as headquarters. Reykjavik contains about seventeen thousand inhabitants, and is mainly composed of comfortable frame houses, roofed with slate, and surrounded by little gardens, in which are cultivated potatoes, cabbage, and other common garden vegetables. None of the cereals, not even barley and oats, will ripen, though it is said they were grown there in former times. The fruits mentioned in the ancient Sagas have wholly disappeared, if we except the low stunted birch and willow bushes, which, however, are not found near the coast. The timber needed, even for the small farm-houses of the interior, is brought from Norway. Yet the bush supplies a sufficiency of fuel in those places, while near the coast, as at Reykjavik, peat alone, of which there are exhaustless beds, is the only fuel, except occasional supplies of English coal. The present aspect of the island is that of a forestless girdle of green, enclosing a volcanic desert, and inhabited by about seventy thousand people. This girdle is in places but a few miles wide, but in others it extends for a considerable distance up the valleys, such as those, for instance, through which flow the Heita (white) and Thorso Rivers. In the valley of the former are found the geysers, long famed as the most remarkable spouting springs known in the world, until Prof. Hayden's recent discoveries in the Yellowstone region. These I had the good fortune to work and examine with minute care. The Stroker Geyser spouted quite two hundred feet for our benefit."

"The famous Lagborg, where the Allthings met, presents

even a more grand and fearful appearance than the old sagas describe it. Our reception here will long be remembered, taking place as it did by the side of the rising waterfall of the famed Oxara River, and beneath the giant-frowning lava cliffs of the Almana-gia."

DRAWING A NECESSITY IN OUR SCHOOLS.

IF, as Taine says, the physical conditions of the country of Greece, its mild climate, its pure, transparent atmosphere, had much to do with making Greek art what it was, may not we of America, with our clear atmosphere, glorious skies, gorgeous autumns, the bold features of our landscape, prophesy a magnificent future for American art. We have witnessed in this young country, in its very cradle, a Charles Wilson Peale, Gilbert Stuart, Copley, Sir Benjamin West, and such institutions as our own "National Academy of Design" in this city, and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia, both founded as early as 1805. We look with admiration upon what is being done by our sister cities in art education, and with pride upon the schools of our Academy of Design, of the Cooper Institute, the great and noble work which they are doing, and have for many years been doing, unaided by donations from city or State; the work, and gift of enterprising benevolence and of the generous impulses of our native artists.

We have thus far almost looked to the older civilizations of Germany, England, and France, for the beautiful and useful in art, manufactures, and architecture. Now, however, we purpose to educate our own children and youths to supply our needs.

The value of graphic teaching is acknowledged by leading colleges and universities: for example, Yale College, and in England, at Oxford. As a contribution to human happiness and usefulness, it should be introduced into all of our schools. Let us consider some of the many branches of education in which drawing is almost a requisite. The desire to imitate the form and color of any striking object is universal among little chil-

dren. Drawing forms valuable habits of mind, in close observation, in comparison, and in invention. It quickens the senses to which it appeals in the contemplation of natural beauties. It is the willing hand-maid of science. We must admit the great and increasing importance of illustration, and also how knowledge of the principles of design and skill in ornamentation must affect our manufacturing interests.

The primary departments of our public schools are particularized for the reason that it is believed that drawing, like elocution, is a plant indigenous to a civilized society, and that very great results may be expected from its early and continued cultivation. To children of a tender age, rapid variation in study is both beneficial and requisite ; the eye, the ear, the hand, and the mind of such demand and revel in constant instruction. Grace to most of these little ones is a natural gift, and when unnurtured in our schools, droops, withers, and decays. After a lapse of years, during which these gifts have been neglected, is it to be wondered at if noxious weeds, only, are to be found in the places once occupied by these tender plants, which, had they been early and properly cultivated, might have rewarded the world with their fruits? These thoughts are not submitted as original ideas, for they may be found largely developed in many modern works, and are now exemplified in some systems of education. They are merely suggestions or elucidations of the necessity of early attention to the training of children correctly in the arts of drawing, design, and color, in which, during the past few years, much progress has been made in schools, among which we mention the Normal School of Oswego. The energetic Krusi, Professor of drawing there, is making his system felt, and awakening interest in many parts of the country. The efficient "School of Design for Women," in Philadelphia, has its *Class for Instructors*, which is doing a good work. Massachusetts has been first to legislate upon the fact, that it is not necessary to depend upon skilled designers from abroad, and that State has made the teaching of drawing a prominent part of her public school work, adding another leaf to her historic greatness. She has imported a skilled master of drawing, Prof. Walter Smith, to supervise and direct the training of her children in skilled art. Other States should look to their interest and follow her wise example. Much attention has, during the

past ten years, been given to apparatus to aid in teaching drawing. This must multiply and be perfected. Such as is of the highest merit we purpose to describe in these pages, and, as far as possible, with illustrations.

We shall begin with the "Perspective Outline Models" of Miss A. C. Covell, Instructor in Drawing in the Normal College of New York City.

Miss Covell sets out by asserting that, in drawing from objects, or in representing upon a flat surface forms that have extension, or height, breadth, and thickness, unlike sculpture, little should be produced according to their geometrical terminations, their real figure and proportion; but, on the contrary, the greater and difficult part should be represented as seen—according to the laws of vision—of perspective, hence every instructor feels that *individual* as well as general instruction is required, in order that the pupil may know how he sees, and be enabled to discern and separate the actual, from the apparent or seeming, and produce such representation of an object, its size, its position, with relation to himself and other objects, as will convey to his mind the same impressions that the object itself and its relations convey. The difficulties that a teacher must encounter when thus instructing large classes in very limited time, can hardly be understood by persons not experienced in teaching pupils to draw from nature. In many schools, because of this large number of pupils in a class, and the short time unavoidably allowed for the lesson, a large part of the instruction is necessarily addressed to a class *en masse*. It is possible in some degree to individualize this general instruction, which is certainly desirable; peculiar wants are thus met, and the assistance to the class is proportionately greater.

So much do pupils need individual instruction when studying from objects, that no doubt many an instructor, from want of time to explain exactly the foreshortening of the model as seen from each individual position, has felt compelled, in despair, to resort to the flat surface alone—to mere copying.

(1) The design of Miss Covell's invention is to lighten the labor of the teacher, and at the same time to enable the student to be more readily instructed in perspective outline drawing from objects.

To assist those not skilled in arts to use this invention, an illustrated description of its construction is given:

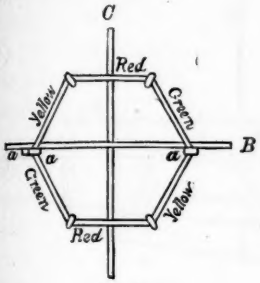

Fig. 1.

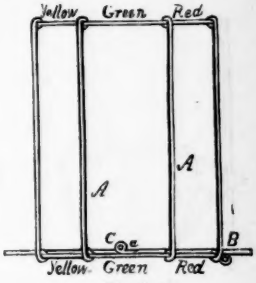

Fig. 2.

Fig. 1 is an end view of a model representing a hexagon. Fig. 2, a plan view of the same. Fig. 3 is a plan view of a

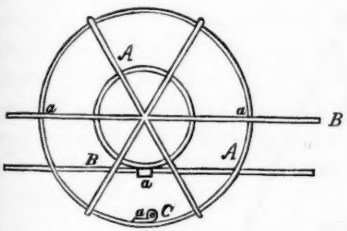

Fig. 3.

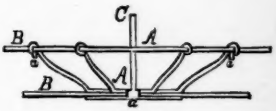

Fig. 4.

model representing a saucer. Fig. 4, a side view of the same. Fig. 5 is an end view of a model representing a book.

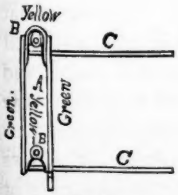

Fig. 5.

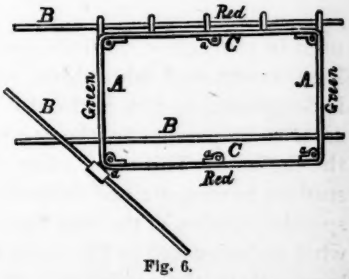

Fig. 6.

Fig. 6, a plan view of the same. Fig. 7 is the side view of a

model representing a cup. Fig. 8, perspective view of an octagon.

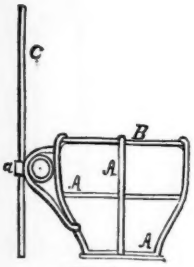

Fig. 7.

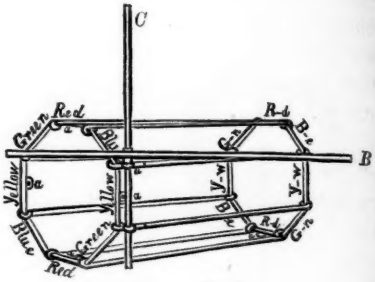

Fig. 8.

A shows a model, made in any desirable shape from wire or other suitable material, and *B*, *C*, are separate wires, to be

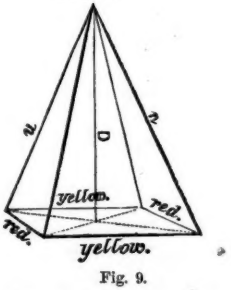

Fig. 9.

(Engraved in the Woman's School of Design, Engraving Class, Cooper Union.)

used in connection with the model *A*, which is provided with loops (*a*) through which these wires are passed. *B* shows what is designated as the horizontal wire, inserted in the model *A* so as to be parallel to the student, the perspective plane, and the horizon. This wire, when placed in position, enables the student to measure and determine the foreshortening and perspective outline of the receding sides of the model. *C* shows what is designated as the vertical wire, passed through eyes or loops (*a*) in the model *A;* in this position, the student, is enabled to measure and determine the foreshortening or linear

perspective of the receding upper and under surfaces of the model.

In some cases the wire *B* is provided with a loop, *a* (see combination in fig. 8), which is passed over the wire *C*, so that the wire *B* is free to move around *C*, and may be adjusted to it at any right angle, so that it may be parallel to any student in the room, and to his perspective plane and horizon. By the employment of these wires combined, the student is enabled to measure and ascertain the foreshortening and perspective outline of the model, in oblique perspective, lying at any angle to him.

It will be further observed that the model *A* may be composed of a series of wires of different colors; or, if preferable, colored wood or wires of different colored metals may be used. The different colored wires are employed that the student *may recognize the lines that are parallel to each other* in the model, whether right lines or curved lines, and are to be so represented in the drawing as parallels, and that if any wire of a particular color or material is to be represented by a line drawn to a vanishing point, all lines of that color or material are to be represented as terminating at the same point; or if the wire is to be represented by a line which does not "vanish," then wires of a like color or of like material must be so represented, and be drawn parallel to this line.

Figs. 3 and 4. When the horizontal wire *B* is placed parallel to the student and through the loops in the middle curve of goblet, saucer, etc., it will be seen that the nearer half of the foreshortened circle is the greater.

Rod *B* is inserted in the loops at the base of saucer, plate, goblet, so that by comparison with it, it may be seen that the curves of the base must not be represented by straight lines (a mistake often made by pupils).

Fig. 7. When the handle of a cup is directly in front of the student, in center of vision, equally distant from the right and left outline of cup, it must be represented by lines vertical or nearly so, but when the cup is at all turned so as to bring the handle nearer one side than the other, it will then curve, the curve increasing in quantity as it approaches the outline of cup, where it is actual size; this may be proven by comparison with vertical wire *C*, inserted in the loop attached to the handle.

Fig. 9. Wire *D* ascending from base of pyramid, or sugar bowl to apex, shows that the extreme lines, n, n, are equi-distant from center *D*. Then when two sides of either of these models are seen at one and the same time, the apex must not be represented over the center of the front, nor one side, but over the center of the whole width, equally distant from the extreme right and left contour n, n, for it is vertical to the center of the base.

The box model is an open box, so that the colors may be parallel.

These frames should be of the same size as the solid models used in any institution employing them.

Miss Covell's mode of using these frames has been, after giving a solid model to the class, with illustrations on the blackboard of its parallel lines, perspective, etc., then after allowing time for sketching from the solid, to remove it, and place instead, a wire model, of the same shape and size, with the combinations, so that the students may see and realize the exact foreshortening, the direction of the lines that describe the form of the model, and make corrections of the first sketch from the solid.

The sincere indorsements of such Artists and Heads of institutions as the following, give us great confidence in the merits and great utility of these models: JAMES M. HART, Artist; D. HUNTINGTON, ex-President National Academy of Design; JAS. D. SMILLIE, Artist; JULIE H. BEERS, Artist; L. E. WILMARTH, Professor in charge of the Life and Antique Schools of the National Academy of Design; HON. PETER COOPER; THOS. HUNTER, President of the Normal College; G. W. SAMPSON, President of Rutgers Female College, and author of "Art Criticism;" A. CRITTENDEN, President of the Packer Collegiate Institute; E. CROASDALE, Principal Philadelphia School of Design for Women; C. SCHUSSELE, Professor of Drawing and Painting in the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts; CALEB COPE, ex-President of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts; JOHN SARTAIN, Vice-President of the Philadelphia School of Design for Women, and Chairman of the Committee on Instruction in the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts; JAMES L. CLAGHORN, President of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts; P. F. ROTHERMEL, Artist. C. C.

CARNIVOROUS FLOWERS.

THE extraordinary discoveries lately made by naturalists in regard to the carnivorous habits of certain flowers have attracted wide attention. "Carnivorous" is a blood-thirsty term to apply to a flower, and there is something at first thought repulsive in the connection. Nevertheless, the fact is proved beyond a doubt that there are flowers which first attract, then entrap the insects, and then, by a slow process, absorb them into their own substance, all but those harder parts in some of their victims which seem to be indigestible. In other words, some very delicate subjects of the floral kingdom do literally, and as a habit, feed on living creatures of the animal world, thriving and blooming on this abnormal diet. It strikes us at first as an outrage on the botanical proprieties, as unnatural and monstrous. It is premeditated slaughter, for some of these flesh-loving plants are baited with a sweetish fluid which attracts wingless insects within the tube and they are unable to crawl out; some are lined with fine, needle-like points, which present a bristling palisade against the prisoner who has unsuspectingly passed them once, but finds return impossible; and some open like valves until the victim has entered, then contract and hold him in a living tomb, where certain death awaits him. Traps and snares indeed are these curious arrangements in the nervous and fibrous texture of these deadly plants.

The simple fact that insects are caught in the hooded cups, or on the spring petals or leaves of certain flowers, has long been known, and in general accepted as scarcely more than accidental, although here and there a sharp inquirer into the secret processes of nature has been investigating in this direction; but within a recent period attention has been turned specially to these phenomena with a view to ascertaining if there are not some peculiar laws in the relation between plants and insects; and the result has been startling, even to the experimentalists themselves, who find that the former have a nervous system and digestive fluids, and that the latter supply food which assimilates gradually with the vegetable substance and in part affords it nutriment.

Mr. Darwin was led to the study in the hope that thereby some light might be thrown upon his favorite theory of evolution, and in his researches he was assisted by Dr. Hooker, of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, in England; at the same time botanists in Germany and France were engaged on the same subject; and finally Sir John Lubbock turned his attention to botany with special reference to the same thing, and now has published "British Wild-flowers Considered in Relation to Insects," which will undoubtedly throw a great deal of light upon it. Meanwhile in the United States no pains have been spared by those competent to investigate, and within the last year or two one lady in particular, Mrs. Mary Treat, of Vineland, New Jersey, herself both a practical botanist and a charming writer, encouraged in her pursuits by Professor Gray, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, has made diligent search for plants possessing these characteristics, and has patiently watched them through months of experimenting, keeping a diary and giving the information thus gained to the public.

The genera known as "insectivorous" have been limited hitherto to about eight in number, but increasing study seems to go to prove that there are yet more of these flesh-feeders. While some are exotic, several are very common in this country. Mrs. Treat's latest experience is with the bladder-wort, which she carefully observed, and found ample proof that the little sacks are traps for water-insects which are unsuspectingly drawn in and then consumed. About a year and a half ago this lady succeeded in finding in Southern New Jersey a vast quantity—acres together—of one variety of the sun-dew (*Drosera filiformis*) in full bloom, and the pretty pink blossoms, she says, "together with the dew-like substance exuding from the glands which cover the long, thread-like leaves, is one of the most beautiful sights I ever beheld," and she found that not only small insects were caught, but "innumerable moths and butterflies two inches across are held captive until they die—the bright flowers and brilliant glistening dew luring them on to sure death." Some of these plants she took to the house, "away from all atmospheric agitation," and began her experiments, pinning living flies "within a quarter of an inch of the most vigorous leaves; in less than one hour the flies' legs are entangled in the glands. * * * I now take the long-leaved

sun-dew, which is more common and a more wonderful fly-trap than either of the other species, place a struggling fly on a vigorous, healthy leaf; in less than three hours the leaf is folded completely around its victim. I take a bit of raw beef, placing it as nearly as possible on the center of the leaf; in twelve hours it is so enfolded in the leaf as to be completely hidden from view." Mineral substances, bits of chalk, etc., were not at all affected. Next she tried the round-leaved sun-dew, whose leaves clasped a piece of raw beef in less time.

This last-named sun-dew is easy to get by any one in the country who may wish during the coming summer to test the process of devouring. It belongs legitimately to the great tribe of insect-destroyers, and has the gland-bearing hairs, exuding the sticky fluid which sparkles like dew or a diamond in the sun, but is so fatal to the winged creatures which come within its reach. It is a little, modest plant, looking as innocent as any harmless way-side weed, and grows very abundantly on the skirts of boggy meadows—luxuriating in the damp, mucky soil and in the open space, where it can receive the full benefit of the sunlight.

Another of the carnivorous families, the Saracenia, contains at least one member which almost anybody can obtain, and which is one of the most interesting and elegant of plants for in-door culture. The genera number a great variety, all of them peculiar and some exceedingly showy—most noticeably so one which a late writer describes as he saw it among the hummocks of a swampy peninsula in Florida, which was a famous region for singular flowers. The pitcher-plant, says he, "grows in a bowl around a hollow center of long, flag-like leaves fixed to the bark of the live oak, and draws its entire nutriment from the air. The hollow of the leaves will contain a quart of water, and it is much sought for by the thirsty traveler. The flower is a marvel of beauty. Imagine a clear ruby as long as your fore-finger, an inch and a half wide at the calyx and three inches at the salver of the corolla, carved into thin, translucent, blood-colored petals."

The variety first mentioned, the common pitcher-plant of the Northern States—is now often seen for sale on the corners of the city streets by the venders of ferns, partridge-berry vines, box-berry, wintergreen and other wild things from the

woods. It looks perhaps rather unpromising to the unaccustomed eye, although curious enough to attract the attention; but if you will invest twenty-five cents in one, take proper care of it, and watch its growth and blooming, you will be a hundred-fold repaid, even if should you not happen to detect any carnivorous habits. If this plant came from a far country, we should be at no little pains to get possession of one. The only care it requires is to set the tuft of roots in a mucky kind of soil, place the pot in a deep saucer, and keep the latter always full of water, for the home of this pitcher-plant is on a quaking cranberry-meadow or similar place where the earth is porous, with water below. The leaves or pitchers must also be daily replenished, for in their native condition they are never empty. A large cluster of these leathery leaves grow without stem directly from the roots, and as fast as one decays another comes up. The color, as they first appear, is of the deepest wine red, and the shape is like a paddle, as bright and shining as if it had been painted and varnished. As they grow, they develop into long, curved, tubular-shaped pitchers, with a rounded hood at the top, and they stand in a compact bunch; and so tough are they that they can be kept on hot coals long enough for the water inside to boil without their shriveling; when full grown they are from six to nine inches high, yellowish-green and purple, streaked with many dark reddish veins, and are lined with fine short bristles. It is by no means an uncouth-looking-plant, but the farthest possible from it, and very beautiful for window culture.

But if with its quaint, urn-like leaves it is worth one's care, what shall be said of the flowers? Early in June one, two, three or more strong, large, round stems, like those of a tulip, grow up from the center of the clump a foot or farther, and each bears at the top a single superb flower—a flower which is of such glorious color and is set with such stateliness on its stalk that one forgets to look at its unique structure. It is as large as a cinnamon rose, and turned over like a head slightly bowed—presenting the under side of the blood-red sepals, of such a dark, deep red that when the sun shines on it you can liken the sumptuous stain to nothing but a gem, or to wine with light straining through it. The reverse side, the face of the flower, is quaint and strange—the five petals are fiddle-

shaped and meet in an arch over the greenish-yellow style, and there you see what looks like a pale green umbrella with five points, and stamens like an old-fashioned red rose. It remains a long time in blossom, and every change is interesting and curious. This wonderful and elegant plant, which gets its technical name some say in honor of Dr. Sarrazin, and others because of the resemblance of the flower to a Saracen's head in a crimson turban, is known as side-saddle flower, Adam's cup, and the huntsman's cup.—*Evening Post.*

SPELLING—THE OTHER SIDE.

IN the "Editor's Table" of *The Popular Science Monthly* for June, Prof. Youmans discourses on spelling, in a new direction. Perhaps our readers may take exceptions to some of his points. We give his discourse entire.

"The severity of the spelling-school contagion is manifestly abating. This is well, for we are told that public excitements are dangerous to reason. Intense and prolonged spasms, religious or social, generally end in a new accession of recruits for the lunatic asylum. It is an interesting question what degree of fervor, extent, and duration of spelling-matches would be required to reduce the general mind to a condition of imbecility. Life is full of contradictions, and we can rarely go a mile with our logic: to misspell our language is a sin, while to reach the height of orthographic virtue may involve intellectual suicide.

"We recollect a wave of excitement that passed over us a few years ago in relation to spelling, a feature or two of which may be worth recalling. A veteran school-teacher of New York dropped a hurried line to a newspaper, in which two or three words were wrongly spelled. It was a dull season for news and excitement, and so, in its enterprise, journalism sat on this old party, and his life was darkened. He has since gone to that undiscovered country where it is to be hoped that Webster and Worcester have never been heard of; but he has left us struggling with the beggarly elements of a barbarous

orthography, and no better off for the storm of reproach to which he was a martyr. His fellow teachers came to the rescue with indignant letters to the editor, and that remorseless personage published them, bad spelling and all, every time. 'Behold,' said he, 'the state of American education, when its masters are unable to spell their native language!' There seemed no question that the highest achievement of the human mind was to put letters together in exact accordance with some authority; and that to drop or transpose a letter, in the tens of thousands of their arbitrary combinations, that form the words of our language, was an offence that should consign its perpetrator to everlasting ignominy. The thing was all going one way until there arose a rebellious voice in the East, which said to the Editor: 'Let me take advantage of the present spelling excitement to fatten a grudge I bear against the literary world.' The soul that had been thus stirred to utterance was that of Elizur Wright, and he went on, in his pungent way, to say: 'A school-master who does not spell correctly by somebody's system should go abroad and stay there. But just here it is that my indignation kindles. Why do we have these illiterate school-masters? I do not stop to blame weak or careless committees: the trouble lies higher. The great masters of English literature, the lawgivers of our language, are such bunglers or charlatans in their own profession, that they ought to be ashamed to fling a pebble at the worst of spellers, or even at the inventor of Egyptian hieroglyphics.' After venting his wrath upon the conservators of the present 'imperfect, unreasonable, stupid, false plan of visualizing the vocal tongue,' he thus proceeds:

"'The misery of the matter is, that it is difficult to get any but blockheads to teach such a blockhead system. We do uncommonly well when we get hold of pedantic dunces who can teach spelling with a vengeance, and perhaps the shell of grammar. Of course, I do not deny that there are some literary saints, of unquestionable genius, who devote or doom themselves to a painful inculcation into the memories of reluctant or rebellious youth of all the incongruities, contradictions, riddles, and sphinx-puzzles of English orthography.' And again: 'English orthography is congenial only with stupidity; and, after thirty or forty years of occasional

observation in regard to it, I am of opinion that good and successful teachers of spelling can seldom write a page without misspelling several words.'

"And this is the writer's significant climax: 'Of another thing I have no doubt at all, to wit, that learning to spell is a discipline pernicious to good mental habits. The minds of unschooled children are eager for facts and the reasons of them; and they are not satisfied with a reason till they see its force. But, after they have been schooled through the inconsequential mysteries of the spelling-book, where a reason has less chance of living than a mouse in a vacuum, they are ready to swallow anything the book or the teacher says, with a leaden quietude. No thanks to the portico of our literature, if they do not continue to take things on trust, as long as there is any thing to be so taken.'

"There is a truth in these last remarks which deserves from educators a great deal more serious attention than it has yet received. No one will deny that our spelling is irrational, and, if so, just to that degree the art of spelling is an irrational practice; that is, it is a practice which, in the first place, calls for no exercise of the reasoning faculty; and, second, it is an exercise which continually violates the dictates of reason. The pupil who should spell a word as reason dictates would be flogged, or in some other way disgraced before the school.

"On the other hand, the pupil that can bring his mind into the most perfect harmony with an irrational system, can go on perpetrating absurdities the longest without failing, wins prizes and applause. This certainly cannot conduce to good mental habits. The child is born into a world of real objects and relations, and the mind grows through experience in acquiring ideas of these actual things. Discrimination, comparison, inference, reasoning, judgment, are all elements of early mental activity, and, in fact, constitute the intellect. Mental growth consists essentially in strengthening and extending these operations on newly-acquired and newly-combined ideas. These rudimentary processes of the infantine intellect are of exactly the same nature as the perfected processes of scientific and philosophic intellects; and it is the true office of education to lead them out, or guide their unfolding from lower to higher states. Written language must be called in at an early

stage, as an indispensable help in this upward progress. Yet, such is the imperfect character of this new instrument, and such the bungling of many who teach its use, that the child is quite as apt to be hindered and stopped by it, in its mental course, as helped on. Nay, when we remember that this is the most critical stage of mental unfolding—the taking of the child out of Nature, as far as that can be done, and immersing it in the school where irrational mental practices are arbitrarily enforced—it is no exaggeration to say that more mind is extinguished than is led out, and that the school-room is as liable to become a mental slaughter-house of the innocents as a place of healthy education. When a child enters school, there should be no break in its earlier mental unfolding; but this is just what generally occurs. Instead of going on with its normal mental exercises, it is turned off into artificial mental exercises. Instead of still employing its thought mainly upon the properties and relations of things, symbols are substituted for things, and the whole action of the mind becomes a manipulation of symbols. The memory is not only loaded with verbal signs, but these are arbitrary and contradictory; and an accuracy is exacted in retaining them which consumes an immense proportion of the time, and, after working great mental mischief, generally ends in failure. Tolerable spelling is, of course, an important thing, but we do not believe in dwarfing or stupefying the mind to gain it. Let it be taught incidentally, and in subordination to the regular exercise of the higher faculties, and the end will be better served than by trying to make it the prime accomplishment of education. Perhaps, in regard to so fundamental a reform, but little is to be expected from the present generation of teachers; but, happily for the hopes of humanity, there is an arrangement by which the present generation of teachers is destined to be taken out of the way."

MR. EDWARD EVERETT HALE says of the salaries of teachers that "they generally range at a grade not much above starvation; they are far inferior to the salaries of a first-class cutter in a large tailor's shop, of a first-class cook in a hotel, and very far below the salaries paid to first-class circus-riders and ballet-dancers."

BLESSINGS ON THE BOYS.

BLESSINGS on the boys. Not the young, healthy, rosy-cheeked, male savages of thirteen or sixteen years. They cannot help being boys, and deserve no special credit or condemnation for it. But blessings on those hale old boys of forty or forty-five or even sixty, who bend their broad shoulders to the burdens of life, but who do not let those burdens crush their hearts; whose eyes are quick to catch the light of merriment over a droll story, and quicker to fill with tears of sympathy for a friend's distress; who retain a boyish love and reverence for all that is womanly; whose boyish confidence in humanity, as a whole, though often shocked, never dies; who watch eagerly for the bright spots of sunshine on life's carpet, and seat themselves where it falls brightest and warmest. They rarely grow very rich, for their boyish generosity is too careless for that; they may not command the awe of admiring crowds; they are not always systematic enough to be safely trusted with important office; but the nimble feet of childhood springs to them; manhood trustingly extends to them a wide open hand, women greet them with a confiding smile, and all through life they live and receive great treasures of pure love. God himself is very tender to these boys.

A NEW MATERIAL FOR PAPER.

CONSIDERABLE attention has recently been called in England to the capabilities of the *Zizania aquatica* as a material for paper. This grass grows in large quantities in swamps on the Canadian shores of Lakes Ontario and Erie, and is known to the native Indians under the name of "Tuscarora," the grains affording an article of diet which is both highly nutritious and palatable, and furnishing food to enormous flocks of wild swans. It is said to possess all the good qualities of the "esparto" from the shores of the Mediterranean, now so largely used for paper making in England, and, besides, to contain less silex, to require fewer

chemicals for its purification, and to make a paper which takes printers' ink with greater sharpness. The great obstacle to its exportation is the heavy freight in consequence of its great bulk; but there is little doubt that if it could be at least partially prepared on this side the water, it might become an important article of commerce. It is stated that a company has been formed for the purpose of obtaining a concession of the land from the Canadian government. The grass is nearly allied to the rice belonging to the tribe Oryzeæ.

PHRENOLOGY: ITS USES TO TEACHERS.

WHAT else does the teacher need so much, after he has acquired a sufficient education to qualify him to understand and to communicate knowledge in the various branches which he is expected to teach, as to understand the being whom he has to teach? No man of sense would send a horse to be shod, to a man, simply because he had the strength to shape the shoe and drive the nails. It would be expected that the horse-shoer should understand not only how to make a shoe and a nail, but something of the structure of the foot and how to apply the shoe and the nail in such a manner that the foot should receive not only no damage but benefit. A man who should undertake to make a boot, a hat, or a coat, without some training in respect to the subject-matter of his efforts, would be hurried into some other neighborhood or pursuit.

The teacher stands highest among workers. If one mars a boot, or badly shoes a horse, the damage may be estimated and, perhaps, by wiser hands corrected. But if he who undertakes to train the mind and educate it for the duties of life fails in his work, he incurs a damage that transcends estimation. We hear men say, "My education is poor, I went to school, but the teacher did not understand my disposition or know how to impart instruction to me, therefore I learned to hate him and the school and my books, and here I am doing drudgery because my education is poor."

If the science of mind has any claim to truth why should not

the teacher avail himself of all the light it can afford. What then is its value to the teacher? It is evident that the teacher needs to know the nature of his pupils and how best to open the pathway of knowledge to each one, as well as how to control and regulate the conduct of all. Nor should the teacher be obliged as at present to wait weeks and months and perchance years before he finds out all the peculiar traits of his fifty or one hundred pupils.

If Phrenology enables one who understands it, to glance over a class of boys and girls and read them almost instantly, so far as the outline and strong features of their characters and talents are concerned, it offers to the teacher, a basis of success and usefulness which can hardly be estimated.

It is claimed by the advocates of this subject that certain temperaments or conditions are adapted to study; others are better adapted to think, and others to exert themselves physically. One of the first things to be done in the teacher's mind, if not in the organization of classes—and it might be done with classes perhaps—is to select the pupils and classify them according to temperament, or constitutional peculiarity. Put the quick with the quick and the slow and the plodding together. We classify a team of horses in that way. Brisk, sharp-eared sorrel nags are harnessed together and they trot in unison and are happy, while the broad backed, square-shouldered, heavy trucksters, with their dark color and thick skins and legs, like mill posts, are harnessed and assorted together, and they walk, pulling their heavy load, keeping time to each others slowness, maintaining their flesh and health and usefulness.

But we classify our pupils less wisely. The sharp-featured, blue-eyed ones, with prominent brows and retreating foreheads, who see the points that are presented and grasp them as quick as chickens will pick up corn, are placed alternately among the dark complexioned, broad backed, sturdy, moderate pupils who think slowly and move slowly but strongly, and require time to think. Of course, the brilliant ones obtain the head of the class and answer all the questions that come within reach of their style of mind, while these slow, solid subjects maintain a steady adherence to the foot of the class, and don't care; they get it into their heads that they are not very sharp and that it

is very little use for them to study. If the quick were placed together and the slow together then it would be quickness against quickness and slowness against slowness. There would be equality at least in the physical conditions.

The teacher ought to know that the boy who is well developed in the upper part of the forehead and moderate across the brow has to do with ideas rather than with facts and things, and he must be taught altogether differently from one who is prominent at the brow and retreating in the forehead. We might as well undertake to put all people in the same sized hat and coat as to try to teach all in a single class.

It is no wonder that teaching is a drudgery and that the noblest profession in the world should be so unsatisfying in its results to those who follow it. It can hardly be disputed that in nothing else is there such need of knowledge of mental philosophy or power to read character, and in no other business are men so wanting in the right means of undertaking their positions and pursuits.

Navigation is studied in the right manner and its practice is adapted to that profession. So of engineering, architecture, manufacturing, commerce. True, the wrong men often get into the wrong places and mar all pursuits; yet men are instructed toward the very duties they are expected to perform. In teaching, who teaches the teacher? Who tells him how to read character, motives, dispositions, talents, peculiarities and the temperaments of his pupils? Who puts him in possession of just that knowledge which he ought to have in order that every stroke may win victory and forward him in the great errand of his life?

Some teachers have learned how to read mind, to understand a class of pupils in a single day's observation. Some have learned how to encourage one and guide another, how to control each one according to his peculiarities. The teacher who knows this, as the musician knows how to bring out harmonies from the instrument, is the one who can teach easily and successfully and proves to be the true teacher. Teachers should learn then how to estimate character, how to read the disposition of each pupil and how therefore to manipulate each one in the best manner to secure the highest success. We shall endeavor to refer to this subject again.

THE ANDERSON SCHOOL OF NATURAL HISTORY.

DIRECTOR Alexander Agassiz, of the Anderson School of Natural History at Penikese Island, announces that the school must be closed on account of a lack of funds. Mr. Anderson's generous gift sufficed to equip the school economically and to support it for two seasons. Afterwards it had to look for an income either to additional endowments, to the Boards of Education of the different States, or those persons who availed themselves of its privileges. The two first-mentioned sources of income having provided nothing, it was announced that students would be required to pay a certain amount for tuition. As, however, those who have availed themselves of the privileges of the school have been mostly teachers of limited means, the increased expense has so largely reduced the number of applicants that the trustees have found it necessary to close the school. In his circular Mr. Agassiz says:

"This interruption, which it is hoped may be only temporary, arises neither from lack of enthusiasm in the pupils of Penikese, nor from any want of generous interest in the naturalists who have thus far given their services to aid the enterprise. On the contrary, the second summer at Penikese was, to the surprise of its friends, as striking a success as the first had been, and the lists for the coming year were as crowded as ever. But the pupils at Penikese come from a poorly paid class. However grateful for the privilege of studying at a seaside school of natural history, very few among them can afford to contribute even a small sum toward its support. On the other hand, the professors, disinterested as they have shown themselves, can hardly continue year after year to give up their summer months, without any adequate remuneration, to this undertaking."

Evidently we have too many schools in need of money. Consolidation of endowments, apparatus, libraries, and faculties is what is required.

AN attempt is making at Harvard to improve the political education of students. A club, to be open to the whole College, for the discussion of political questions, is the means suggested.

THE COLLEGE WAR IN NEW JERSEY.

THE TRUE STORY OF THE CANNON.

THERE has been for a long time, at New Brunswick, an arsenal of the canons of the Synod of Dort. The students of the college determined recently to add another piece of heavy artillery to the stores of war. They had been assured for a long time by the students of Princeton that they held a cannon belonging to Rutgers College, and invited them to come and get it. They accepted the invitation, and on the night of April 26th nine of them came and saw and took it. Then "there was war in heaven;" the students of Princeton preparing to recover what they now claimed as their own, and the students of Rutgers preparing to hold it at all hazards. Now the *deus ex machina* appears. "A verbose and lordly epistle went from Capreæ" from Dr. McCosh, of Princeton, to Dr. Campbell, of Rutgers, which was answered. These letters Dr. McCosh, in his own wisdom and discretion, gave to the reporter of the *Sun*, who seems in the whole matter to have been his confidential friend. These letters speak for themselves:

PRINCETON, *April* 29, 1875.

MY DEAR SIR:—I am excessively anxious that there should be no collision between Rutgers College and Princeton College. I greatly fear that there may, if the cannon extracted from our grounds by students of Rutgers is not returned. Meanwhile, I ask you for an assurance that you will try to secure this.

The cannon taken never was at Rutgers College. There is some vague story about another cannon, now in our possession, having been in New Brunswick some forty years ago, or more; but the one now removed never has been there. You may take advantage of the blunder to get the whole matter arranged.

If this is not done I fear that among excited youths evils may arise which neither you nor I can prevent, but which both of us would lament, as doing injury to our institutions, which are expected to do something better than train our young men to nocturnal raids, followed, it may be, by disgraceful retaliations.

Yours truly, JAMES MCCOSH.

TO DR. WM. H. CAMPBELL.

To this President Campbell replied:

NEW BRUNSWICK, *April* 30, 1875.

MY DEAR SIR:—The nocturnal raid of this week has my decided condemnation. I am distressed at its occurrence, and I am distressed that your own students have, as I fear, occasioned it by professing to have in their possession, and to have set up in your grounds as a trophy, a cannon taken from Rutgers College.

During my Presidency of Rutgers College no trophy shall be set up or continued on its grounds, of which the boast is openly made that it was stolen from any place. And now have I not a right to ask of you, in turn, the assurance that you will try to have the cannon, professedly stolen hence, returned? or, if there is no truth in this boast, that the falsehood shall be acknowledged?

I have given orders that the cannon taken from Princeton must be removed from our grounds, and it has been done; and you may rest assured that nothing which can be done to make the students of Rutgers College obey the laws of God and the laws of the State of New Jersey will be neglected by the Faculty and Trustees of Rutgers College, or by me, its President.

I am yours ever, WILLIAM H. CAMPBELL.

To DR. MCCOSH.

A Rutgers professor carried the letter of Dr. Campbell to Princeton, and brought back a proposition for arbitration. This was agreed upon, and the Hon. Amze Dodd was appointed in behalf of Princeton, and the Hon. Cortlandt Parker on behalf of Rutgers, they to choose a third person. When committees of the two faculties met to arrange the terms of arbitration they found that they could arrange the whole matter without disagreement, which they proceeded forthwith to do. The nine men who took the cannon, having held it in their possession for nearly three weeks under the jealous eyes of the students and the town, now entrusted it to the Chief of Police, to await the decision of the committees. They declared that they took the cannon believing that it belonged to them, and they would abide by the decision. The students of Princeton were restrained in the meanwhile by the repeated assurances of Dr. McCosh that the cannon had been ordered back, and would come—if not by moral means, then otherwise—a promise over whose fulfillment he had no more control than over the tides, but which depended upon the excited and uncertain temper of the students and citizens at New Brunswick. In fact, a great obstacle to the speedy settlement of the question and assured return of the cannon was the intemperate language of Dr. McCosh and his inability to hold anything without leaking. On Wednesday night, the 19th of May, an episode occurred. Some students of Princeton broke into a building on the campus of Rutgers College and took thence a few muskets. The committee had, however, already agreed upon the report which was to be read to the two colleges on Friday morning. The world had it first, however, in the *Sun*, as Dr. McCosh was compelled to confide its substance to his young friend the reporter:

REPORT.

After full and thorough investigation we find the following facts established by unquestionable evidence:

1st. That the cannon removed from the premises of the College of New Jersey on the night of April 26th is a relic of the battle of Princeton; that since that event, until its recent removal to New Brunswick, it had not been out of Princeton, and

during almost the entire period was not off the College grounds, and was set up on the campus October 16, 1858.

2d. That the larger cannon, now in the campus at Princeton, is also a relic of the battle of Princeton: that it was taken from that place to New Brunswick during the war of 1812, for the defense of the town; that it remained in New Brunswick until about the year 1836, but was at no time on the premises or in the possession of Rutgers College; that it was then brought from New Brunswick to the suburbs of Princeton, not by students of the college but by the Princeton Blues, a military company composed of citizens of the town; that in 1838 it was brought by students to the College grounds, and in 1840 was planted where it now stands.

3d. That the two cannon above mentioned are the only cannon that have ever been set up on the premises of the College of New Jersey.

4th. That in 1854 a cannon which had been for a short time in the possession of the students of Rutgers College was removed; and it was afterwards supposed by students of Rutgers College, but erroneously, that this had been done by Princeton students.

5th. That in consequence of facts above mentioned the belief has generally prevailed in New Brunswick and among the students and graduates of Rutgers College, that one or the other of the cannon at Princeton had been taken by Princeton students from the premises of Rutgers College.

6th. That this belief was confirmed by declarations to that effect more or less frequently made by students and graduates of the College of New Jersey.

In view of the facts above recited we conclude—

1st. That no cannon taken from Rutgers College has ever been set up on the premises of the College of New Jersey; nor have the students of the College of New Jersey ever removed or attempted to remove a cannon from the custody of the students of Rutgers College, or from New Brunswick.

2d. That any boasts, taunts, or statements, based upon any belief or tradition to the contrary, have been and are wholly unfounded.

3d. That the students of Rutgers College who were engaged in the removal of a cannon from the premises of the College of New Jersey, on the night of April 26, 1875, having been incited thereto by the belief that the said cannon, or a similar one, had once been in possession of the students of Rutgers College, and had been removed therefrom by Princeton students, are to be exonerated from any imputation of willful and malicious mischief.

4th. That the cannon in question should be returned to the College of New Jersey.

The committee recommend that this report be entered on the minutes of the Faculty of each institution, and that it be officially announced to the students.

Dated *May* 19, 1875.

The report was received with joy at Princeton and with grief at Rutgers. A new complication arose, which again made the return of the cannon uncertain. The taking of the muskets and the declaration of Dr. McCosh that the cannon would be back at twelve o'clock that day, appearing in the *Sun* on the morning before the reports were made known, raised such a storm among the students and in the city at New Brunswick that all attempts to control it seemed utterly futile. Every effort to repair these breaches of amity and trust was made. At Princeton, the muskets were immediately secured and returned before morning; and at New Brunswick, the next morning (Saturday), the Chief of Police managed, by the aid of his whole force, in spite of a large crowd, to get the cannon out of the town and to deliver it, with a letter from the captors, to Dr. McCosh.

LETTER FROM THE STUDENTS.

RUTGERS COLLEGE, NEW BRUNSWICK,
May 22, 1875.

REV. DR. MCCOSH—*Dear Sir*:—On the night of the 26th of April, 1875, we removed a cannon from the campus of the College of New Jersey, in accordance with our firm belief that it was the property of Rutgers College students, this belief having been confirmed by Princeton students and graduates, as well as by a long line of tradition. Having fully understood the facts of the case, we are clearly convinced that we have no claim to the gun in question, and desiring now, as we have from the first, to do what is strictly honorable, and also to carry out the agreement made by us to abide by the decision of the Faculties in the matter, we hereby return the cannon.

For the purpose of removing any misapprehension as to the true state of the case, we add the following statement: That we have had the cannon in question in our custody from the night of the 26th of April to the date of its return, and at no time has the gun been in the possession or under the control of the Faculty of Rutgers College; and that we return it of our own free will, for the reasons above stated.

WILLIAM R. WHITEHEAD
EDWARD A. REILEY,
GEORGE MCC. TAYLOR,
JOSIAH TICE,
ISAAC VAN WINKLE,
EDWARD I. PITMAN,
WILLIAM M. STILLMAN,
ELLIS F. POTTER,
CHARLES T. POMEROY.

And there is peace.

SPELLING, AGAIN!

AT the recent spelling match in Hartford, Mr. Samuel L. Clemens introduced the "Orthographical Solemnities" in the following Mark Twain style:

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I have been honored with the office of introducing these approaching orthographical solemnities with a few remarks. The temperance crusade swept the land some time ago, that is, that vast portion of the land where it was needed, but it skipped Hartford. Now comes this new spelling epidemic, and this time *we* are stricken. So I suppose we needed the affliction. I don't say we needed it, for I don't see any use in spelling a word right, and never did. I mean I don't see any use in having a uniform and arbitrary way of spelling words. We might as well make all clothes alike and cook all dishes alike. Sameness is tiresome; variety is pleasing. I have a correspondent whose letters are always a refreshment to me, there is such a breezy, unfettered originality about his orthography. He always spells Kow with a large K. Now

that is just as good as to spell it with a small one. It is better. It gives the imagination a broader field, a wider scope. It suggests to the mind a grand, vague, impressive new kind of a cow. Superb effects can be produced by variegated spelling. Now there is Blind Tom, the musical prodigy. He always spells a word according to the sound that is carried to his ear. And he is an enthusiast in orthography. When you give him a word, he shouts it out—puts all his soul into it. I once heard him called upon to spell orang-outang before an audience. He said,—'O, r-a-n-g, orang, g-e-r, ger, orangger, t-a-n-g, orangger tang!' Now a body can respect an orang-outang that spells his name in a vigorous way like that. But the feeble dictionary makes a mere kitten of him. In the old times people spelled just as they pleased. That was the right idea. You had two chances at a stranger then. You know a strong man from a weak one by his iron-clad spelling, and his hand-writing will help you to verify your verdict. Some people have an idea that correct spelling can be taught—and taught to anybody. That is a mistake. The spelling faculty is born in a man, like poetry, music, and art. It is a gift; it is a talent. People who have this gift in a high degree only need to see a word once in print, and it is forever photographed upon their memory. They cannot forget it. People who haven't it must be content to spell more or less like—like thunder, and expect to splinter the dictionary wherever their orthographical lightning happens to strike. There are 114,000 words in the unabridged dictionary. I know a lady who can spell only 180 of them right. She steers clear of all the rest. She can't learn any more. So her letters always consist of those constantly recurring 180 words. Now and then, when she finds herself obliged to write upon a subject which necessitates the use of some other words, she—well, she don't write on that subject. I have a relative in New York who is almost sublimely gifted. She can't spell any word right. There is a game called Verbarium. A dozen people are each provided with a sheet of paper, across the top of which is written a long word like 'kaleidoscopical,' or something like that, and the game is to see who can make up the most words out of that in three minutes, always beginning with the initial letter of that word. Upon one occasion the word was 'cofferdam.' When time was called everybody had built from five to twenty

words, except this young lady. She had only one word—calf. We all studied a moment and then said, 'Why, there is no *l* in cofferdam.' Then we examined her paper. To the eternal honor of that uninspired, unconscious, sublimely-independent soul be it said, she had spelt that word 'caff!' If anybody here can spell calf any more sensibly than that, let him step to the front and take his milk. The insurrection will now begin."

THE SUMMER EDUCATIONAL MEETINGS.

THE usual preparations for the educational gatherings for this summer are now in vigorous progress. From all that we can learn the preparations are ample, and the occasions promise unusual interest.

THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION is to hold its fifteenth annual meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on the 3d, 4th, and 5th days of August.

AT THE GENERAL SESSION, Lectures, Papers, and Discussions are expected from the following persons: D. C. GILMAN, President John Hopkins University, Baltimore, Md.; J. B. ANGELL, President University of Michigan; JOHN EATON, Jr., National Commissioner of Education, Washington, D. C.; DUANE DOTY, Superintendent Public Schools, Detroit, Mich.; A. P. MARBLE, Superintendent Public Schools, Worcester, Mass.; LEON TROUSDALE, State Superintendent Public Instruction, Nashville, Tenn.; W. F. PHELPS, President State Normal School, Winona, Minn.; Dr. J. W. HOYT, Madison, Wis.; Miss GRACE C. BIBB, City Normal School, St. Louis, Mo.; WM. W. FOLWELL, President State University, Minneapolis, Minn.; LEWIS FELMERI, Professor of Pedagogics, at the University of Klausenberg, Austria. The subjects of Agricultural and Polytechnic Instruction, Country Schools, Health in the School-Room, School Record Books, Course of Study in High Schools and Colleges, German Pedagogy, Education in the Southern States, Centennial Anniversary, etc., will be discussed.

The Department of Higher Instruction is to be instructed by Prof. W. LEROY BROUN, University of Georgia; Lieut. A. D. SCHENCK, U. S. A.; Rev. J. B. BITTINGER, of the Penn. Prison Reform Association, and Prest. D. C. GILMAN.

The Department of Normal Schools will be instructed by Prof. G. P. BEARD, Miss DELIA A. LATHROP, Prof. JAMES JOHONNOT, Prof. C. F. R. Bellows.

The Department of Superintendence is officered by J. ORMOND WILSON, of Washington, D. C., as President; A. ABERNETHY, of Iowa, Vice-President; R. W. STEPHENSON, of Columbus, O., Secretary.

The Department of Elementary Schools will be instructed by H. F. HARRINGTON, J. L. PICKARD, and Miss FRANCES E. WILLARD.

The officers of this Association are, President, WM. T. HARRIS, St. Louis, Mo.; Secretary, WM. R. ABBOTT, Bellevue, Va.; Treasurer, A. P. MARBLE, Worcester, Mass. They seem to have overlooked nothing in making thorough arrangements for the convention. Particulars of special arrangements for hotel and railroad accommodation may be obtained by addressing either of the officers.

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION will hold its forty-sixth convention in Providence, July 7th, 8th, and 9th. We have not been favored with its programme.

THE UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK will hold its twelfth anniversary at Albany on the 6th, 7th, and 8th of July. The secretary, Dr. Daniel J. Pratt, Albany, N. Y., will give particulars on application.

THE NEW YORK STATE TEACHER'S ASSOCIATION will convene in Fredonia, on the 27th, 28th, and 29th of July.

Interesting papers on important subjects will be read by State Superintendent GILMOUR, Prof. BUCKHAM, Dr. N. T. CLARKE, Dr. JAMES CRUIKSHANK, and by other eminent educators. President SANDFORD is working earnestly to provide an interesting and profitable meeting. The usual committee will be in attendance to provide quarters for all who apply, and the usual concessions in railroad fares will be secured.

KEEP THE BRAIN FALLOW IN CHILDHOOD.

WHEN we are considering the health of children, it is imperative not to omit the importance of keeping the brain fallow, as it were, for several of the first years of their existence. The mischief perpetrated by a contrary course, in the shape of bad health, peevish temper, and developed vanity is incurable. Some infant prodigy, which is a standard of mischief throughout its neighborhood, misleads them; but parents may be assured that this early work is not by any means all gain even in the way of work. I suspect it is a loss; and that children who begin their education late, as it would be called, will rapidly overtake those who have been in harness long before them. And what advantage can it be that a child knows more at six years old than its compeers, especially if this is to be gained at a sacrifice of health which may never be regained? There may be some excuse for this early book-work in the case of those children who are to live by manual labor. Is it worth while, perhaps, to run the risk of some physical injury to them, having only their early years in which we can teach them book-knowledge? The chance of mischief, too, will be less, being more likely to be counteracted by their after life. But for a child who is to be at book-work for the first twenty-one years of its life, what folly it is to exhaust in the least its mental energy, which, after all, is its surest implement!

CURRENT PUBLICATIONS.

SOME writings of the late Mrs. Henry M. Field have been collected and published under the title of *Home Sketches in France*. They are aptly named "Home Sketches," for Mrs. Field was a French lady, though she lived in this country for the twenty-five years previous to her death. Thus, while she was thoroughly familiar with her subject, she was enabled by her long residence here, and her acquaintance with various forms of social life to judge impartially. Her criticism of the French educational system is among the clearest we have seen.

She points out its excellencies, but justly notes, as its great defect, at the time she wrote, the gross neglect of popular education. Very charming, too, are her descriptions of the "Charities of Paris," and of "Home Life in France." Mrs. Field came to New York in 1849. She had no acquaintances here but soon drew about her a circle of friends, among whom were some of our most cultivated citizens. She taught in a girls' school, until her marriage. The reading of memoirs has gone out of fashion, but surely the study of such a life as Mrs. Field's cannot but be beneficial to young girls whose characters are just forming. A woman of brilliant natural endowments and of thorough education, she devoted all her energies to doing good. Many young artists and authors are indebted to her for encouraging words, and for substantial aid. The poor, too, were assisted by her, so far as her means allowed. Certainly a life spent in such works is more noble and satisfactory than one devoted to selfish ends.

SARAH HACKETT STEVENSON has prepared a book entitled *Boys and Girls in Biology*, which treats of life from the lowest form of vegetable, to the vertebrate animals. It is a scientific work but it is written in unscientific language, a great advantage in books for children. It discusses subjects, too, with which young people are familiar, revealing to them wonderful truths concerning objects so well known, as scarcely to attract attention. Thus the fungus, the fresh-water mussels, the lobster and the butterfly are described.. The book is a good one, and yet we fear that it will do little good, not because of any fault of the author, but because teachers are not well posted in biology. To learn the lessons by rote, would give scraps of useful knowledge, but to make them effective teachers must be able to illustrate and enlarge upon the subject. Some day we hope they will be able to do so.

HENRY JAMES, Junior's, *Transatlantic Sketches* are delightful reading, more perhaps for those who have traversed the ground over which his pilgrimage was made than for those acquainted with the localities only through books. He does not describe places and scenes after a guide-book fashion, but tells the impressions made upon him by them; impressions which many may have felt, but which few can express. His sketches begin with Chester, the quaintest city of England, and lead us

through France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Holland, and Belgium. A pleasanter guide than Mr. James we could not well have. When we have finished his book we have, as he says in regard to Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, "a sense of knowing a good deal that is not set down in Murray."

VOLUME SEVEN of the *Science Primers* by J. N. Lockyer, treats of *astronomy*. The illustrations employed to give true ideas of the motions of the heavenly bodies are happily chosen, being for the most part those which children can verify. The rising and setting of the sun, for example, is explained by means of a ball on a table, around which the pupil walks. The book contains charts which, though small, are sufficiently clear.

"*God's Word through Preaching*," by John Hall, D.D., is the fourth series of the Lyman Beecher Lectures before the Yale Theological School. The present course, consisting of ten lectures, does not discuss doctrinal points, but is devoted to giving practical counsel to young ministers. Dr. Hall makes suggestions, derived from his own large experience, in a style clear and forcible. The book is intended for preachers, but we, though not preachers, have derived much pleasure and profit from its perusal; so may many lay readers.

WE have before us a new work on "*Christian Ethics*," by D. S. Gregory, D.D. The more important truths are made prominent by a judicious arrangement of type, so that the student can grasp salient points without burdening the mind with a mass of details. This is a great excellence. There is little new in the work, but a new presentation of truths gives them freshness. Dr. Gregory endorses Prof. Bascom's severe condemnation of nude art which, together with the theater and opera, have, he says, "always merited and received the unanimous condemnation of the wise and virtuous." This is not true, as pupils will discover. It may appear a minor matter, but it is not unimportant, for if faith in the teachings of a book is weakened in one particular it is weakened in all.

IT is stated that an American girl won the gold medal at the recent examination at the College of Brazil, Rio de Janeiro.

MISCELLANEA.

THE school of the Collegiate Dutch Church, of New York City, has recently observed its two hundred and forty-second anniversary.

THE average salary of certified masters of elementary schools in England and Wales is $517 per annum. More than one-half also are provided with a house, or live rent free. In Scotland, the average pay is $351, and two-thirds live rent free. In Ireland, the average is $232, and only a little over one-fifth have their houses rent free.

THE principal of the female High School at Louisville, Ky., reports that in the institution over which he presides, "for a number of years past there has been a larger per centage of absence on account of sickness during the month or six weeks succeeding the Christmas holidays than during any other equal length of time in the scholastic year."

PROF. F. RONDEL, of 1298 Broadway, New York, will remain in the city during the summer, and will instruct a limited number of ladies in drawing and painting. He will take occasional trips in the country with his class for the purpose of sketching from nature. Special terms will be made with teachers. This affords a good opportunity for securing *good instruction* during the vacation.

PUBLISHERS' DEPARTMENT.

Talmage's Sermons.—The sermons and articles of T. DeWitt Talmage, which formerly were published in *The Methodist* and *The Interior*, are now furnished only to *The Christian at Work*, of which journal Mr. Talmage has recently become editor. Sample copies of *The Christian at Work* mailed free. Office, 102 Chambers Street, N.Y. See advertisement.

The Methodist said, a while since: "Mr. Talmage's sermons are thoroughly evangelical, and are receiving the widest attention. He is the most popular preacher of the day."

The Miracle of To-Day, by Charles B. Warring, is being very widely and favorably noticed by both the religious and the secular press. The *American Protestant* says: "This work shows deep study and research, and a determination by the author to settle all doubtful questions. Every student of the Bible should have a copy." The New Orleans *Christian Advocate* says: "The volume abounds in scientific information and Scriptural exegesis, and is written in the interest of the truth. Its perusal will entertain and instruct, and, at the same time, increase our reverent faith in the word of God."